

Message Text

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10

ORIGIN AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

INFO AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 150691

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ET, SO, OAU

SUBJECT: SOMALI-ETHIOPIAN RELATIONS

REF: (A) STATE 128046 (NOTAL)

(B) STATE 143589 (NOTAL)

(C) MOGADISCIO 1087 (NOTAL)

(D) MOGADISCIO 1110 (NOTAL)

(E) ADDIS ABABA 8789

1. SOMALI AMBASSADOR ADDOU URGENTLY REQUESTED MEETING WITH AF IN LATE AFTERNOON JULY 27 TO DISCUSS "VERY SERIOUS MATTER." ADDOU SHOWED TEXT OF GSDR CABLE TO GENERAL GOWON ADVISING HIM OF JULY 23 BORDER INCIDENT REPORTED REF D, COMPLAINING ABOUT "DAILY PROVOCATIVE ACTIONS" OF ETHIOPIAN MILITARY IN BORDER AREA AND SEEKING PROMPT, CONFIDENTIAL

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MORE EFFECTIVE ACTION BY OAU COMMITTEE TO COOL SITUATION.

ADDOU SAID BECAUSE OF MUTUAL FEARS AND POTENTIAL FOR ACCIDENTAL IGNITION OF CONFLICT, BOTH SIDES SHOULD WITHDRAW FROM BORDER AREA. HE REQUESTED USG TO APPROACH IEG WITH MUTUAL WITHDRAWAL PROPOSAL. WHEN TOLD THAT IT WAS DEPT'S UNDERSTANDING THAT IEG TROOPS NOT LOCATED WITHIN FIFTEEN MILES OF BORDER, ADDOU ADDED NEW WRINKLE TO PREVIOUS WITHDRAWAL REQUEST. DANGER OF ARMED CLASH SO GREAT, HE SAID, THAT BORDER PEACE COULD BE ASSURED ONLY IF BOTH SIDES UNDERTOOK MAJOR WITHDRAWAL OF FORCES FROM BORDER AREAS TO POSITIONS OCCUPIED PRIOR TO TROOP MOVEMENTS EARLIER THIS YEAR. GSDR HOPED THAT USG, WHICH AS MAJOR SUPPLIER OF ARMS TO ETHIOPIA AND LONG-TIME FRIEND OF EMPEROR HAD GREAT INFLUENCE WITH IEG, WOULD ATTEMPT TO PERSUADE IEG TO TAKE SUCH STEP.

2. DEPUTY ASST. SECY. ROSS INFORMED ADDOU THAT USG HAD CONSISTENTLY CONVEYED TO IEG OFFICIALS VARIOUS ASSURANCES WHICH GENERAL SIAD AND OTHER RANKING SOMALI OFFICIALS HAD REPEATEDLY GIVEN US OF SOMALI PEACEFUL INTENTIONS TOWARDS ETHIOPIA. ON JULY 25 AMBASSADOR ADAIR HAD INFORMED HIM OF RECENT SOMALI DEMARCHES IN MOGADISCIO (MOG 1087) AND WASHINGTON (STATE 143589) RE SOMALI FEARS OF ETHIOPIAN AGGRESSION. AGAIN HIM STRESSED IEG DESIRE TO HAVE PEACE WITH SOMALIA.

3. AS FOR ADDOU SUGGESTION THAT WE SPEAK TO IEG RE WITHDRAWAL OF THEIR FORCES FROM OGADEN, ROSS BELIEVED SUCH PROPOSAL SHOULD BE MADE TO AND THROUGH OAU. NOT ONLY DID USG NOT WISH TO BECOME DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN DISPUTE, BUT OAU WOULD CARRY MUCH MORE WEIGHT WITH IEG ON MATTER OF THIS KIND. AT SAME TIME ROSS STATED WE WOULD INSTRUCT EMBASSY ADDIS TO INFORM OAU SECGEN OF CONTINUING SOMALI FEARS AS EXPRESSED IN THEIR SEVERAL RECENT DEMARCHES TO US, INDICATING ALSO OUR VIEW THAT OAU WAS MOST APPROPRIATE BODY TO ATTEMPT TO FACILITATE CONCILIATION.

4. WHEN ASSISTANT SECRETARY NEWSOM JOINED DISCUSSION NEAR ITS END, ADDOU REPEATED GIST OF HIS REMARKS. NEWSOM REPLIED USG DID NOT FEEL IT COULD INJECT ITSELF
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INTO DISPUTE IN WHICH OAU OFFICIALLY INVOLVED. EXCEPT FOR SOMALIA, HE SAID, NO AFRICAN POWER HAD SUGGESTED ACTIVE US INVOLVEMENT. IN ADDITION, USG HAD LITTLE INFLUENCE WITH IEG IN MATTER SUCH AS SOMALI-ETHIOPIAN TERRITORIAL DISPUTE WHICH IEG CONSIDERS TO BE OF VITAL NATIONAL INTEREST. ETHIOPIANS MUCH MORE LIKELY TO PAY HEED TO SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF 8-NATION "GOOD OFFICES" COMMITTEE ESTABLISHED BY OAU.

5. ACTION REQUESTED:

FOR ADDIS: IN VIEW SERIOUS SOMALI CONCERN OVER IMPENDING ATTACK AND FACT OAU ALREADY SEIZED WITH DISPUTE, EMBASSY REQUESTED TO DISCUSS WITH OAU SEC. GEN. EKANGAKI (OR, IN HIS ABSENCE, ACTING SEC. GEN.), SOMALI FEARS AND DEMARCHES TO US, US BELIEF OF PEACEFUL ETHIOPIAN INTENTIONS, AND FACILITATING BUT LIMITED US ROLE IN COUNSELLING RESTRAINT. EMBASSY SHOULD STRESS US DESIRE TO AVOID DEEPER INVOLVEMENT IN AFRICAN BILATERAL PROBLEM AND EXPRESS HOPE OAU CAN SUCCESSFULLY MEDIATE DISPUTE.

FOR MOGADISCIO: CHARGE SHOULD INFORM SIAD THAT, AS EVIDENCE OF US DESIRE FOR PEACE IN HORN AND AS RESULT OF US-SOMALI DISCUSSIONS, US INFORMING OAU LEADERSHIP OF GIST OF THOSE DISCUSSIONS. ROGERS

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